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Commentary: Environmentalists' dirty little secret about renewable energy and population control

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Not a day passes without a far-left environmentalist or politician calling for the United States to adopt one or more massive government spending programs to prop up the renewable-energy industry as part of their attempt to combat man-caused global warming. And billions more are given every year to countless researchers across the country — many of whom, especially at public universities, already earn a large salary at taxpayers' expense — to develop renewable-energy technologies.

But behind the many protests and dire warnings about global warming and the need to “go green” is a secret problem few environmentalists want to talk about but is one that will inevitably be exposed in the coming decades as technology improves and renewable energy becomes more affordable. Most of the environmental left knows the secret, but almost no one is willing to tell Americans the truth, because doing so would erode the trust they've attempted to build with the public over the past half-century and expose environmentalists' anti-human agenda.

Lurking in the shadows of the debate over the use of renewable energy is the cold reality that environmentalists don't really want new cheap forms of energy — at least, not without other, disturbing policies in place — because clean, truly affordable energy would catalyze population growth, thereby furthering what environmentalists view as the planet's destruction.

The availability of cheap energy has unquestionably led to numerous scientific and technological advancements that have vastly improved humans' quality of life and led to tremendous world population increases.

In 1750, the [world population \(http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/sixbillion/sixbilpart1.pdf\)](http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/sixbillion/sixbilpart1.pdf) is estimated to have been 791 million. By 1900, 150 years later, the population had nearly doubled, to about 1.7 billion. But since 1900, the world's population has skyrocketed alongside the rise of affordable energy and the numerous technological improvements that have come along with that achievement. From 1900 to 1950, the global population increased by 53 percent, to 2.5 billion. By 1999, it was 6 billion, and it's expected to reach 9.8 billion by 2050, [according to the United Nations. \(https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/world-population-prospects-2017.html\)](https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/world-population-prospects-2017.html)

People are also living longer than ever before. [According to the National Institute on Aging \(NIA\), \(http://www.businessinsider.com/how-has-life-expectancy-changed-throughout-history-2015-6\)](http://www.businessinsider.com/how-has-life-expectancy-changed-throughout-history-2015-6) a division within the National Institutes of Health, the highest life expectancy reported in any nation in 1840 was under 50 years old. Today, it's approaching 90 in some countries, and NIA reports, "The 85-and-over population is projected to increase 351 percent between 2010 and 2050," the largest increase of any age group.

An aging, growing population should be something to celebrate, but for many on the left, more people means additional pollution, a greater proportion of the world's land being occupied, and more natural resources extracted.

It's for these reasons the environmental left has a long history of opposing human population growth and/or expanded settlement. For instance, John Muir, one of history's most famous conservationists, [once said, \(http://crazythingsliberalsay.com/2015/07/man-is-always-and-everywhere-a-blight-on-the-landscape/\)](http://crazythingsliberalsay.com/2015/07/man-is-always-and-everywhere-a-blight-on-the-landscape/) "Man is always and everywhere a blight on the landscape."

If environmentalists believe a growing world population will inevitably cause more destruction to Earth, why would they ever support the creation of cheap, renewable energy, which allows people to live longer, healthier lives?

The left's environmental secret is that the only way cheap energy can exist in a world in which population growth is limited is if humans have fewer kids — either by choice or because they've been forced to.

Bill McKibben, one of the most influential environmentalists in the Democratic Party today, is one of the few prominent environmentalists openly calling for fewer people. In fact, [he wrote an entire book \(http://www.billmckibben.com/maybe-one.html\)](http://www.billmckibben.com/maybe-one.html) about why people should have fewer kids to save the world, and he was subsequently "raked over the coals" [\(http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/green_room/2007/09/global_swarming.html\)](http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/green_room/2007/09/global_swarming.html) for it, as the left-wing *Slate* noted. Generally speaking, people get very worried — and reasonably so — when they start hearing elites tell them they ought to or must reduce their family size.

Leftists know, as McKibben learned the hard way, the only realistic strategy for advancing radical environmentalists' agenda is to shut up about their views on reducing population growth — for now — and to instead focus on trying to force expensive renewable energy down the world's throat.

Al Gore, former President Barack Obama, and others have repeatedly argued renewable energy makes economic sense (it doesn't, or else we wouldn't need to subsidize it with billions of tax dollars) or, at the very least, that it will make sense soon. However, when renewable energy does become cheap and widely

available, radical environmentalists will have a whole new problem to solve: figuring out a way to convince you that your little children are going to destroy the planet someday by living too long and having too many children of their own, so you better not have more of them.

Environmentalists know this, and they're quietly working on ways to someday convince people to stop making more people. But for now, they'll continue preaching to the world how spectacular the benefits of cheap renewable energy would be — all the while knowing those “benefits” undermine everything else they believe about saving Earth from the “blight” caused by humanity.

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